



BILLING CODE 6717-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. PF17-8-000]

Commonwealth LNG LLC

**Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Planned
Commonwealth LNG Project, Request for Comments on Environmental Issues,
and Notice of Public Scoping Session**

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) that will discuss the environmental impacts of the Commonwealth LNG Project involving construction and operation of facilities by Commonwealth LNG LLC (Commonwealth LNG) in Cameron Parish, Louisiana. The Commission will use this EIS in its decision-making process to determine whether the project is in the public interest.

This notice announces the opening of the scoping process the Commission will use to gather input from the public and interested agencies on the project. You can make a difference by providing us with your specific comments or concerns about the project. Your comments should focus on the potential environmental effects, reasonable alternatives, and measures to avoid or lessen environmental impacts. Your input will help the Commission staff determine what issues they need to evaluate in the EIS. To

ensure that your comments are timely and properly recorded, please send your comments so that the Commission receives them in Washington, DC on or before March 26, 2018.

If you sent comments on this project to the Commission **before** the opening of this docket on July 28, 2017, you will need to file those comments in Docket No. PF17-8-000 to ensure they are considered as part of this proceeding.

This notice is being sent to the Commission's current environmental mailing list for this project. State and local government representatives should notify their constituents of this planned project and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

A fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land? What Do I Need To Know? is available for viewing on the FERC website (www.ferc.gov). This fact sheet addresses a number of typically asked questions, including the use of eminent domain and how to participate in the Commission's proceedings.

Public Participation

For your convenience, there are four methods you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. The Commission will provide equal consideration to all comments received, whether filed in written form or provided verbally. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has expert staff available to assist you at (202) 502-8258 or FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov. Please carefully follow these instructions so that your comments are properly recorded.

- 1) You can file your comments electronically using the [eComment](#) feature on the Commission's website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to [Documents and Filings](#). This is an easy method for submitting brief, text-only comments on a project;
- 2) You can file your comments electronically by using the [eFiling](#) feature on the Commission's website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to [Documents and Filings](#). With eFiling, you can provide comments in a variety of formats by attaching them as a file with your submission. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on [eRegister](#). If you are filing a comment on a particular project, please select "Comment on a Filing" as the filing type; or
- 3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the following address. Be sure to reference the project docket number (PF17-8-000) with your submission:

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street NE, Room 1A
Washington, DC 20426
- 4) In lieu of sending written or electronic comments, the Commission invites you to attend the public scoping session its staff will conduct in the project area, scheduled as follows:

Date and Time	Location
Tuesday, March 13, 2018 4:00 to 8:00 pm	Johnson Bayou Community Center 5556 Gulf Beach Highway Johnson Bayou, LA 70631

The primary goal of these scoping sessions is to have you identify the specific environmental issues and concerns that should be considered in the EIS to be prepared for this project. Individual verbal comments will be taken on a one-on-one basis with a court reporter. This format is designed to receive the maximum amount of verbal comments, in a convenient way during the timeframe allotted.

The scoping session is scheduled from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm CDT. You may arrive at any time after 3:30 pm. There will not be a formal presentation by Commission staff when the session opens, and we note that no refreshments will be served. If you wish to speak, the Commission staff will hand out numbers in the order of your arrival. Comments will be taken until 8:00 pm. However, if no additional numbers have been handed out and all individuals who wish to provide comments have had an opportunity to do so, staff may conclude the session at 7:30 pm.

Your scoping comments will be recorded by the court reporter (with FERC staff or representative present) and become part of the public record for this proceeding. Transcripts will be publicly available on FERC's eLibrary system (see below for instructions on using eLibrary). If a significant

number of people are interested in providing verbal comments in the one-on-one settings, a time limit of 5 minutes may be implemented for each commentor.

It is important to note that verbal comments hold the same weight as written or electronically submitted comments. Although there will not be a formal presentation, Commission staff will be available throughout the comment session to answer your questions about the environmental review process. Representatives from Commonwealth LNG will also be present to answer project-specific questions.

Please note this is not your only public input opportunity; please refer to the review process flow chart in appendix 2.¹

Summary of the Planned Project

Commonwealth LNG plans to construct and operate a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal on the west side of the Calcasieu Ship Channel near Johnson Bayou in Cameron Parish, Louisiana. Commonwealth LNG intends to use the terminal to liquefy, store, and deliver LNG for export to global markets. The terminal would have a peak capacity of nine million metric tonnes of LNG per annum (MTPA). Commonwealth LNG would also dredge a ship berth and turning basin at the terminal.

The Commonwealth LNG Project would consist of the following facilities:

¹ The appendices referenced in this notice will not appear in the Federal Register. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail and are available at www.ferc.gov using the link called eLibrary or from the Commission's Public Reference Room, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426, or call (202) 502-8371. For instructions on connecting to eLibrary, refer to the last page of this notice.

- a 3.7-mile-long natural gas receiving pipeline (either single 30-inch or dual 24-inch pipes) extending from existing pipelines operated by Kinetica Partners LLC and Bridgeline Holdings LP to the terminal;
- four 2.0 MTPA gas pre-treatment trains;
- eight liquefaction trains, with a nominal LNG production capacity of approximately 1 MTPA each;
- six LNG storage tanks, each with a capacity of 40,000 cubic meters (m³);
- electric plant powered by a 80-megawatt gas turbine;
- boil-off gas handling system, utilities, and communications system; and
- one marine berth sized to accommodate LNG carriers up to about 215,000 m³ in capacity.

The general location of the planned LNG facility, as well as several potential pipeline routes, are shown in appendix 1.

Land Requirements for Construction

Construction of the planned facilities would disturb about 132.6 acres of land for the upland terminal and pipeline. This acreage may vary somewhat depending on which pipeline route is selected. About 64.6 acres would be affected in the Calcasieu Ship Channel for the creation of the turning basin. Following construction, Commonwealth LNG would maintain about 122.4 acres for permanent operation of the upland terminal and pipeline right-of-way. Temporary construction areas would be restored and revert to former uses.

The EIS Process

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the Commission to take into account the environmental impacts that could result from an action whenever it considers the issuance of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. NEPA also requires us² to discover and address concerns the public may have about proposals. This process is referred to as scoping. The main goal of the scoping process is to focus the analysis in the EIS on the important environmental issues. By this notice, the Commission requests public comments on the scope of the issues to address in the EIS, including pipeline routing. We will consider all filed comments during the preparation of the EIS.

In the EIS we will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of the construction and operation of the planned project under these general headings:

- geology and soils;
- land use;
- water resources, fisheries, and wetlands;
- cultural resources;
- vegetation and wildlife;
- air quality and noise;
- endangered and threatened species;

² We, us, and our refer to the environmental staff of the Commission's Office of Energy Projects.

- public safety; and
- cumulative impacts.

We will also evaluate possible alternatives to the planned project or portions of the project, and make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas.

Although no formal application has been filed, we have already initiated our NEPA review under the Commission's pre-filing process. The purpose of the pre-filing process is to encourage early involvement of interested stakeholders and to identify and resolve issues before the FERC receives an application. As part of our pre-filing review, we have begun to contact some federal and state agencies to discuss their involvement in the scoping process and the preparation of the EIS.

The EIS will present our independent analysis of the issues. We will publish and distribute the draft EIS for public comment. After the comment period, we will consider all timely comments and revise the document, as necessary, before issuing a final EIS.

To ensure we have the opportunity to consider and address your comments, please carefully follow the instructions in the Public Participation section, beginning on page 2.

With this notice, we are asking agencies with jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise with respect to the environmental issues related to this project to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of the EIS.³ Agencies that would like to request cooperating agency status should follow the instructions for filing comments provided

³ The Council on Environmental Quality regulations addressing cooperating agency responsibilities are at Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1501.6.

under the Public Participation section of this notice. Currently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has expressed its intention to participate as a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS to satisfy its NEPA responsibilities related to this project.

Consultations Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's implementing regulations for section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we are using this notice to initiate consultation with the applicable State Historic Preservation Office(s), and to solicit their views and those of other government agencies, interested Indian tribes, and the public on the project's potential effects on historic properties.⁴ We will define the project-specific Area of Potential Effects (APE) in consultation with the SHPO(s) as the project develops. On natural gas facility projects, the APE at a minimum encompasses all areas subject to ground disturbance (examples include construction right-of-way, contractor/pipe storage yards, compressor stations, and access roads). Our EIS for this project will document our findings on the impacts on historic properties and summarize the status of consultations under section 106.

⁴ The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regulations are at Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 800. Those regulations define historic properties as any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Currently Identified Environmental Issues

We have already identified several issues that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the planned facilities and the environmental information provided by Commonwealth LNG. This preliminary list of issues may change based on your comments and our analysis.

- selection of pipeline route;
- evaluation of temporary and permanent impacts on wetlands and the development of appropriate mitigation;
- potential impacts on fish and wildlife habitat, including potential impacts on federally listed threatened and endangered species;
- potential visual effects of the aboveground facilities;
- potential impacts of the construction workforce on local housing, infrastructure, public services, transportation, and economy;
- impacts on air quality and noise associated with construction and operation of the project; and
- public safety and hazards associated with LNG facilities.

Environmental Mailing List

The environmental mailing list includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American Tribes; other interested parties; and local libraries and newspapers.

This list also includes all affected landowners (as defined in the Commission's

regulations) who are potential right-of-way grantors, whose property may be used temporarily for project purposes, or who own homes within certain distances of aboveground facilities, and anyone who submits comments on the project. We will update the environmental mailing list as the analysis proceeds to ensure that we send the information related to this environmental review to all individuals, organizations, and government entities interested in and/or potentially affected by the planned project.

Copies of the completed draft EIS will be sent to the environmental mailing list for public review and comment. **If you would prefer to receive a paper copy of the document instead of the CD version or would like to remove your name from the mailing list, please return the attached Information Request (appendix 3).**

Becoming an Intervenor

Once Commonwealth LNG files its application with the Commission, you may want to become an intervenor which is an official party to the Commission's proceeding. Intervenor play a more formal role in the process and are able to file briefs, appear at hearings, and be heard by the courts if they choose to appeal the Commission's final ruling. An intervenor formally participates in the proceeding by filing a request to intervene. Motions to intervene are more fully described at <http://www.ferc.gov/resources/guides/how-to/intervene.asp>. Instructions for becoming an intervenor are in the Document-less Intervention Guide under the e-filing link on the Commission's website. Please note that the Commission will not accept requests for intervenor status at this time. You must wait until the Commission receives a formal application for the project.

Additional Information

Additional information about the project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at **(866) 208-FERC**, or on the FERC website (www.ferc.gov) using the eLibrary link. Click on the eLibrary link, click on General Search and enter the docket number, excluding the last three digits in the Docket Number field (i.e., PF17-8). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or toll free at (866) 208-3676, or for TTY, contact (202) 502-8659. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

In addition, the Commission offers a free service called eSubscription which allows you to keep track of all formal issuances and submittals in specific dockets. This can reduce the amount of time you spend researching proceedings by automatically providing you with notification of these filings, document summaries, and direct links to the documents. Go to www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp.

Finally, public sessions or site visits will be posted on the Commission's calendar located at www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx along with other related information.

Dated: February 22, 2018.

Kimberly D. Bose,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018-04709 Filed: 3/8/2018 8:45 am; Publication Date: 3/9/2018]